portance of attending to their dictates; how scantily diffused is its daily practice, let the evidence of daily experience testify. Estimates of loss of life—occasioned by neglect of the laws which God has beneficently provided for our comfort and happiness—have been made, the coldest statement of which is the most appalling; pictures—drawn, alas! from the very life—have been presented, the details of which have been harrowing in the extreme, and these so often and so repeatedly, that it seems as if the warnings which were thus thundered in the public ear, had only the effect of deadening its apprehension of the danger, and inducing the apathy and indifference which they were only meant to arouse and to dispel. Year after year stern disease and the pale pestilence, are allowed to run riot in our crowded cities, decimating their populations unopposed and altogether unheeded. Hundreds of our fellow-men are allowed to drag out, from day to day, weary existences in dens into which some would be ashamed to thrust their very dogs; and more than this, and perhaps more closely interesting to those who have it in their power to remove the causes, disease is engendered, fostered, and encouraged in quarters in which, from their position and situation, it might be well exempt; and yet, with this state of matters staring us in the face, difficult to be got rid of, impossible to be denied, it seems that the mere fact of our knowing the theory of the science, and fully conceding the importance of its claims, only results in the practice of sanitation being continually ignored. We boast of our superior enlightenment, of our high state of civilization, of our mechanical wonders, our luxuries, and comforts: we plume ourselves on a Glass Palace: we talk complacently of the Great Exhibition, and are proud of the genius and the wealth which fill it with its glowing wonders; but we pass "unheeded by" the horrors and miseries which surround us in our daily walks, and treat with no laudation, but unmerited indifference, the labours of the men who have devoted a lifetime to the interests of humanity, and the amelioration of the condition of their fellow-men.

Poll throughout the kingdom the hundreds of wealthy men who yearly lay out vast sums in building, and tell us—not how many are alive to the importance of sanitary construction: they are all to a man convinced of that,—but how many will authorize or instruct their architect or builder to introduce those very arrangements into practice, the good of which they so readily admit in theory. Passing strange it is, that men who in the ordinary routine of their daily business are so cool and calculating as never to lose sight of what has been emphatically called the "main chance," should, in a matter of so much importance to themselves and the community as practical sanitation, ignore or calmly overlook the pecuniary advantages attendant upon following out its details; or, on the other hand, be indifferent as to the inevitable and *calculable* loss suffered by their neglect. And yet, to the veriest dolt that would devote an hour to its consideration, the whole subject is so plain and palpable, that we may well wonder at the apathy with which it is treated by *men of business*. It seems to us as if all the time spent in detailing the scenes of filth, neglect, and—their sure concomitant—disease, which surround us in crowded cities, and of proving, however shortly, that so sure as we thrust our fellow-men to dwell among them, so surely does death begin his dreary work, is but so much precious time lost; that the stern truths we tell of, are but as idle breath to which as much attention is paid as to the "wind that bloweth where it listeth." Sad and woful as are the effects of the great battle of life, ever fighting around us, it is as if the great majority of our luckier fellow-men care not for the sufferings of those whose lives "are not cast in such pleasant places." Verily, seeing the present state of sanitary practice, we may well despair of doing good by drawing attention to the dreary facts made known by sanitary philosophers, in the hope of rousing into activity the principles of humanity, of so large a portion of that class with whom rests the responsibility and the privilege of bettering the condition of their fellow-men. We should like to see, to the close appeals made them, something of a more interested heart's response, a response that would be, not at the best, cold and lifeless, but as a philosopher's stone, that would transmute all it touched into the precious metal. But if appeals to humanity are made in vain, the appeal to the pocket must be attended to. The time *will* come when the selfish question, "how does this state of matters affect my pocket?" will gain high consideration. At present too many act as if the fact that so much mortality results from sanitary neglect was one that could not in the remotest sense affect them; but sooner or later the stern truth will to such become obvious, that no matter when a death takes place which sanitary measures would have prevented, so certainly are they called upon to pay a modicum of the loss, which, in the aspect of individual items, may be looked upon with indifference, but, when heaped up into a mighty aggregate, will then be worthy of earnest thought. To an individual of this class, the recital of the horrors of the cellars and alleys, and of the pest houses of our crowded cities, may do no more than call up an expression of wonder or surprise,—and the deaths occasioned by fevers and plagues, created and fostered by a state of matters shameful to the credit of a civilised community,—may create in him no other feeling than that of desire to be personally clear of the dangerous influences; content with the expression of the selfish wish, too prevalent among many professing to be Christians,—"let me be safe, but as for you, poor nurslings of a day, die—but die alone! let not mine eyes witness your misery." In this quotation—alas! for human kindness and that love which knows no tie save that which binds in a common bond all humanity,—may be summed up the whole degree of interest that many feel in the matter: so that *they* are safe, no matter what may be the lot of others. It would be but a mere idle waste of time to show to such, how from every rank and squalid den around and near them, arises an influence for evil that, sure as the sun gives light, closely affects their interests; that not a death takes place but what they are connected with, and—wink at it as they may, and shut out as they will, the truth from all admission to their convictions—for which they are not in a measure most responsible.

These are those who heap vituperation, heavy in amount, unfeeling in its kind, on the classes they are pleased to term—"the great unwashed;" little thinking that, in the very term they use, there is an amount of keen and cutting irony rebounding on themselves, which, if they would or could but see it, might induce them to make some little effort to remove the term from amongst us. They raise woful Jeremiads about the dishonesty and faithlessness of so large a proportion of our population—of the vice that dwells amongst them—of their crimes, which are ever fast increasing—of the loathsome dens they live in—of their habits of intemperance, uncleanness, and improvidence, and of the disease which is ever filling up loathsome graves; and all the while they think and act as if this was a state of matters which had no concern for them, and which to alleviate and remove called for not the slightest atom of their exertion. Holding, as we do, the opinion, that before expecting any improvement in the moral habits of our poorer classes, or to quote the pet phrase of the advocates of the "laissez faire" system we have already noted "the great unwashed," we must first remove the physical evils which press upon them with such a deadly weight, we cannot blame them, or heap upon them that amount of scorn which so many unthinkingly do. "Here is a point of wretchedness which is incompatible with the existence of any respect for the peace or property of others; and to look, in such a case, for obedience to the laws when there is the slightest prospect of violating them with impunity, is to expect to reap where you have not sown." Born midst physical darkness, breathing a noxious atmosphere, nursed in their earliest infancy amidst filth, and wretchedness, and immorality, their infant lullaby and childhood lesson the hardened oath and obscene expression,—their youth spent in prowling about dark alleys, their companions thieves, their teachers mayhap murderers;—starved, ragged, and uncared for—how can young, nursed in childhood amongst such scenes, schooled in riper years to vice and wickedness, know better? How can they know the distinction between right and wrong, the difference between good and evil? To expect the inhabitants of such wretched quarters to be morally pure, whilst they are allowed to remain physically impure, is as absurd as to expect the natives of an uncivilised and unconverted island to shew, in their daily walk, the beauties of the Christian life. When shall we—a consideration of our present social state may well enforce the question—begin to strike at the root of all our social misery—of the cause of most of our crime? When shall we learn that all the stately machinery of our courts of justice, of our prisons, penitentiaries, convict ships, penal settlements and the hideous gallows—a dreary list—never will eradicate vice, never prevent crime. We may fill our jails to overcrowding: we may load our convict ships with their living freights; aye, and may hang by scores; but we shall find that so long as we follow our present system, from the dark alleys and haunts of misery recruits will come up fast and thick to fill the ranks of crime and to keep in motion the cumbrous machinery of our criminal law; and so long, moreover, shall we have workhouses to build, poor-rates to pay, and all the items of the heavy bill entailed upon us by a thoughtlessness which it would scarcely be an exaggeration to designate by a harsher name, as "heartless crime at which angels weep."

It is unnecessary again to enter into the proof of the fact we have stated, namely, that for all losses occasioned to society by *preventible* deaths, the survivors in whatever class *must* pay; but seeing that it is so, would it not be better for all classes to unite and get rid of the causes—so foul and rife—of disease and death surrounding us,—to do that voluntarily and with all the grace of a ready and willing gift, which, under the present arrangement, we are compelled to do, and have, moreover, no credit for, but rather, on the contrary, the shame incurred by the neglect? We should like to see the belief become more prevalent, and spread until all the wealthy and the powerful in social life were believers in the creed, that it is more in keeping with our profession as a nation of Christians to prevent crime rather than foster and encourage it—to enable men to live rather than to stand by and suffer them to die—to build good houses rather than have to provide them with graves—to give men work to live in comfort in their own dwellings than to build palaces and call them prisons and workhouses—to raise schools rather than houses of correction—and to enable men to clothe and feed their families rather than to resuscitate the erection of ragged schools and soup kitchens. But before this—we hope not Utopian—scheme of daily life in Britain can be realized, there is much work to do, much rank soil to be upturned, now lying waste; and the cultivation of which would redound with profit to all concerned; great apathy to be overcome, the ignorant to be enlightened, the indifferent to be aroused, the disease and its causes to be discovered and the remedy applied. It is the duty as well as the privilege of every one who can lend a helping hand, in getting rid of the monstrous heap of evils that stare us in the face, to work with a will: there is most assuredly a way. The field is wide, and the labour must be severe; but great men have already worked in it, and earned names that will be as "familiar as household words," when those of the conquerors of battle-fields shall be unknown: it is well to follow in their steps, and although the names of labourers of lesser note may be "unknown to fame," it is some consolation to know that though the amount of labour may not be as great as that performed by the "stalwart men of name," the proportion *may* be, and its influence, in its

For more information on PDF Compression and OCR go to our website